Center Field

March 2012

C4IT Service Center

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The CSD Officially Opens

On January 10, 2012 the Coast Guard officially opened its new centralized IT service desk in St. Louis, MO. Over the past year, the Coast Guard has transitioned its IT support functions from across the United States to a single location in order to better serve the Coast Guard community. The new organization, called the Centralized Service Desk (CSD), operates 24/7/365 and provides users with improved customer service and easy access to the help they need.

RDML Bob Day and Mr. Mark Powell cut the ribbon marking the official opening of the Centralized Service Desk in St. Louis.

This ribbon cutting represents new opportunities on the horizon for the city of St. Louis and the Coast Guard, particularly in the IT industry. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 61,000 net jobs have been lost in the St. Louis metropolitan area since employment last peaked in February 2008. With an unemployment rate holding steady at 8.9 percent since, even incremental gains such as this represent progress. Since the CSD has begun taking on new services in June of 2011, 35 Active Duty Coast Guard and 6 civilians have transitioned to St. Louis, and 33 contractors have been hired.

One local contractor hired by the CSD is Jason Lucas, a St. Louis native who has been with the CSD since August of 2011. Lucas was unemployed for eight months, which is not uncommon in St. Louis, where the average jobless stint now lasts 10 months. Previously, he had to take a job outside of his specialty in order to get by. He was there for only a few months when he received a call from a recruiter looking for his expertise at the CSD.

''It gave me an opportunity to have a steady job in the IT field. It's been the best thing that I have had so far – it has changed my whole attitude. Even my wife says my outlook toward work has changed," says Lucas.

But the CSD is not done growing. New services are continuing to be integrated, with additional enterprise applications moving their IT support functions to St. Louis in the coming months.

The CSD has a great deal to offer the St. Louis community with its continued emphasis on expansion and local hiring. The CSD also illustrates that the Coast Guard can keep pace with IT industry leaders, a necessity when networks and communications are critical to maintaining readiness and swift disaster response.

Snow Can't Keep Coast Guard From Duty

Throughout Alaska the men and women of the Coast Guard have to work on equipment in remote areas of the state. Along with the remoteness of the areas they have to deal with the challenges of unpredictable weather.

Recently Petty Officer First Class Marcel Leroy and Petty Officer 2nd Class William Yi, both electrical technicians with Electronic System Support Detachment Valdez made a trek through four to six feet of snow to service a remote aids to navigation site near Valdez, Alaska.

"Some of the greatest challenges of working on remote sites here in Alaska during the winter in unpredictable weather are transporting personnel and equipment to and from sites," said Yi. "Leroy and I prepared a reference station computer weighing approximately 30 pounds for transport to a remote site."

The remote site called Potato Point is accessible only by a helicopter flight or a 30 minute boat ride followed by a 30 to 60 minute snowshoe commute to the site. The times vary due to snow depth and white out conditions. Even wearing snowshoes you can sink up to two to four feet in the snow.

Upon arriving at the transmitter building Leroy and Yi found the entrance blocked by six feet of packed snow, but they were able to dig through the snow and gain entrance to the building. During the site visit Leroy and Yi inspected antenna masts and associated equipment, troubleshot equipment and finalized their trip by making the long trek back to the pier to head home.

"The long walk down the pier ended at a ladder with a warm welcome from shipmates," said Yi. "Making the long trek to and from the site and conducting the repairs or maintenance helps remind us why we do the job, helping keep mariners safe throughout Alaska."

This photo shows IT1 Pitts from ESD Valdez removing snow from government housing.

This picture shows an NDS site located near Juneau on the Northern tip of Admiralty Island. ETC Aaron Spencer is a member of ESU/ESD Juneau doing work to repair a broken antenna casualty on Robert Barron high site on 18 Jan 2012.

CDR John P. Dailey Award

By LTJG Kenneth Fisher

RDML Robert E. Day, Coast Guard CIO presents the CDR John P. Dailey Award to CDR Lucinda Cunningham and Mr. Gary Earling at Coast Guard Headquarters in Washington DC, February 6, 2012. The award is presented to members who have displayed exceptional leadership, honored our core values, and displayed noteworthy examples of mentorship in leading our C4IT support constructs to meet Coast Guard mission execution objectives. The awardees were nominated by their peers; from a field of nearly 3,000 IT professionals working in the Coast Guard; not only because their technical knowledge, but because they continue to display the qualities of true mentorship, improving the lives of everyone around them.

CDR Cunningham currently serves as Chief, Enterprise Management Branch, C4ITSC-TISCOM, Alexandria, VA. She is responsible for all aspects of Incident, Problem, Patch, and Delivery Management of Coast Guard enterprise IT services. CDR Cunningham consistently displayed exceptional leadership, honored our Coast Guard core values, and promoted minority recruitment. She embraced diversity while she displayed unwavering commitment to her shipmates with numerous noteworthy examples of mentorship in leading our workforce to meet Coast Guard missions.

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CDR John P. Dailey Award (continued)

RDML Day, Coast Guard CIO (center), displays the award plaque for the John P. Dailey Award to CDR Dailey's family members and award recipients. Pictured, CDR Dailey's Father, John W. Dailey (left), Son, John Dailey (second from left), Wife, Fon Dailey (third from right), and award recipients CDR Lucinda Cunningham (second from right) and Mr. Gary Earling (right).

Mr. Gary Earling currently serves as Chief, Information Division, Coast Guard Pay & Personnel Center, Topeka, KS, overseeing the Coast Guard's transformation to an all electronic personnel tracking system. Mr. Earling's exceptional technical acumen, charismatic personality, and genuine commitment to better the lives of everyone he encounters by providing sound guidance and advice has helped shape many technology professionals lives both professionally and personally.

The award was created to honor CDR John P. Dailey, USCG, who passed away in 2009. CDR Dailey was a staunch advocate for members of the C4IT community. He was a model officer, an outstanding leader, superb engineer, and charismatic mentor who, while fighting cancer, displayed courage in the face of adversity and continued mentorship and advocacy for the C4IT community until the very end.

Greetings from the C4ITSC CMC

I have plenty of things on my mind that I would like to share with all of you.

The first topic that comes to mind is the Career Retention Screening Panel (CRSP). The CRSP message (ALCOAST 025/12) announced that those who were screened in the 2010 CRSP and haven't advanced since that screening will be reviewed this year along with any other members who meet this year's criteria and were not screened in 2011. What does that mean to you if you are going to be screened in the 2012 CRSP? First and foremost you should review the accuracy of your Electronic Personnel Data Record (EIPDR). You may find things like awards or positive page 7's missing. If so, work with the SPO to get those items into your EIPDR. I would also like to point out that the CRSP panel is in place to ensure that our best performers are retained, as the Coast Guard is experiencing above normal retention and as a result cannot retain everyone, as this directly impacts advancements and flow through the junior enlisted ranks.

I wanted to take a moment to focus on the Coast Guard's Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) as the amount of reported incidents of sexual assaults within the Coast Guard rose last year. Sexual assault violates our core values of Honor, Respect, and Devotion to Duty and will not be tolerated. Furthermore, if such a case is reported to you, you are to notify your chain of command immediately. Do not start your own fact finding mission as this is what CGIS is tasked and trained to do. What is sexual assault? Sexual Assault is defined as intentional physical contact of a sexual nature, committed without the victim's consent. A victim is not considered to have consented where the perpetrator uses force, threats, or coercion to commit the sexual contact, or where the victim is asleep, incapacitated, or unconscious.

MCPO Daryl Bletso
C4IT SC Command Master Chief

Finally, I wanted to take a moment to congratulate the Centralized Service Desk (CSD) personnel and all those involved with the ribbon cutting ceremony of the CSD. While the ribbon cutting ceremony was a brief event, it marked a culmination of an immeasurable effort. It goes without saying that a great deal of effort went towards establishing new policies, processes, and construction and outfitting of CSD spaces. What cannot be overstated is the degree of patience and flexibility CSD personnel displayed with frequent shifts of temporary work spaces, and a barrage of other obstacles. Congratulations once again!

CMC Daryl Bletso

C4ITSC and SFLC hold Process Guide Signature Ceremony

By Timothy Strickland, C4ITSC-BOD Chief

The Director of the C4IT Service Center and Commander of the Surface Forces Logistics Center (SFLC) recently signed the Fleet C4IT Coordinated Mission Support Process Guide, along with the jointly developed *Engineering Change* (EC) and *Time Compliant Technical Order* (TCTO) Process Guides. The signing was a culmination of efforts to define the roles and responsibilities within the two centers to field and sustain C4IT capabilities on our surface assets.

Figure 1: Mr. Mark Powell (Director, C4IT-SC) and CAPT Mike Haycock (Commander, SFLC) during the signing of the Fleet C4IT Coordinated Mission Support Process Guide

To avoid conflicting direction that would normally occur during the development of various independent joint Process Guides, a combined guidance body was formed. The *Mission Support Leadership Team for Fleet Electronics* (MSLT-FE) was chartered by the C4IT-SC Director and SFLC Commander and chaired by their Deputies. Membership includes key representation from each Center's Shared Service Divisions as well Product Lines and Core Technologies. The MSLT-FE's initial tasking was to clearly define the roles and responsibilities of the C4IT-SC and SFLC components involved in the deployment and lifecycle sustainment of Fleet C4IT capabilities. To aid in determining and documenting these functions, the group leveraged a RACI Matrix (defined below), which is a model that was used in the stand-up of our logistics and service center's internal organizations. They immediately discovered that the RACI Matrix model lacks a critical organizational role that was being defined within DCMS, that of "Technical Authority." The model was adjusted to include the Technical Authority role and the model was rebranded as a TRACI Matrix.

A TRACI Matrix provides an ability to define specific functions and then allocate organizational responsibilities, based on the roles defined in Table 1.

	Role	Definition
T	Technical Authority	Those organizations that are ultimately answerable as the HM&E or C4IT Technical Authority, making all "systems" related technical decisions on issues governing the acquisition and the establishment of life-cycle support strategies for these systems and equipment deployed on Coast Guard vessels. Multiple "T" roles can be assigned to a function, each representing their technical area.
R	Responsible	Those who actually complete the task; the "Doer". They are responsible for action and/or implementation. This responsibility can be shared. The degree of responsibility is determined by the individuals with the "A" and/or "T" roles.
A	Accountable	The individual who is ultimately answerable to the Operational Commander for Coast Guard asset availability. The Accountable role includes the authority to Approve or Disapprove a function. There can only be one individual that is Accountable for a function; therefore, only one "A" can be assigned to a function.
C	Consulted	The individual(s) that are to be consulted prior to a final decision or action. This incorporates two-way communication between the individuals assigned various roles.
I	Informed	The individual(s) who needs to be informed after a decision or action is taken. This incorporates one-way communication.

Table 1: *TRACI Matrix Role Definitions*

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C4ITSC and SFLC hold Process Guide Signature Ceremony

Although only one "A" role can be assigned to a function, multiple "T" roles, or Technical Authorities, can be assigned. For example, approving an Engineering Change for the installation of a communications system may involve Technical Authorities for Electrical Power, Radio Frequency Communications Interoperability, Electro-Magnetic Interference, and TEMPEST Mitigation.

CONSENSUS MANAGEMENT ROLES FOR FLEET C4IT MISSION SUPPORT

TRACI Matrix Functions		C4IT-SC		SFLC	
		CTMs PLMs	Shared Services	Asset PLMs	Shared Services
5	DEPOT MAINTENANCE FUNCTIONS				
	Plan Asset Depot Maintenance	C	R	A, R	R
	Plan C4IT System Depot Maintenance	T, R	R	A, R	R
	Schedule Asset Depot Maintenance	C	R	A, R	R
	Schedule C4IT System Depot Maintenance	T, R	R	A, R	R

Table 2: A portion of the Fleet C4IT TRACI Matrix, shown depicting role assignments for Depot Maintenance Functions

During the development and role assignments for the TRACI Matrix, the members of the MSLT-FE identified nine major functional areas associated with the lifecycle sustainment of Fleet C4IT and began diagraming the Swim Lanes for each. These functional areas focused on Engineering Changes, Customer Interfaces, the C4IT Maintenance Program, Supply Chain Management, Depot Maintenance Management, Configuration Management, Lifecycle Management, Maintenance Cost Per Operational Hour Management, and Technical Information Management. The Swim Lane Diagrams graphically depict the higher-level processes within these function areas, placing them in their respective TRACI assignments. For example, the TRACI Matrix assignments for C4IT Depot Maintenance are provided as Table 2 and the corresponding Swim Lane Diagram is shown as Figure 1.

As the Swim Lane Diagrams began taking shape, the MSLT-FE established and tasked working groups to develop the processes and Process Guides for each of the functional areas, leveraging the role assignments documented in the TRACI Matrix and the higher level processes identified in the Swim Lane Diagrams. Two Process Guides were identified as critical to Fleet

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C4ITSC and SFLC hold Process Guide Signature Ceremony

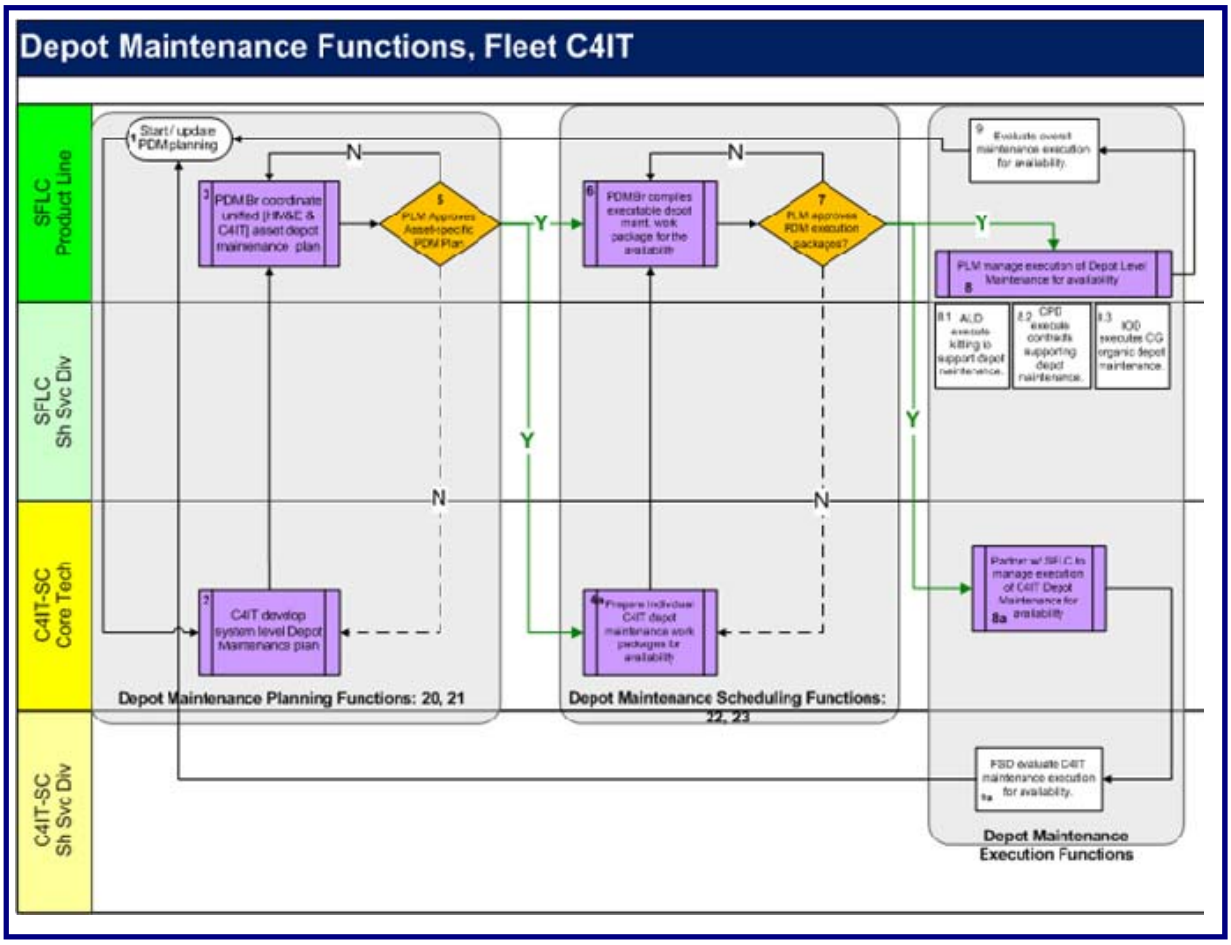


Figure 2: Swim Lane Diagram depicting high-level process assignments for Fleet C4IT Depot Maintenance Functions

C4IT sustainment efforts. They were the Engineering Change Process Guide and Time Compliance Technical Order (TCTO) Process Guide. These Process Guides were concurrently signed by the C4IT-SC and SFLC Directors at the same time that the Fleet C4IT Coordinated Mission Support Process Guide was signed. Other areas that the MSLT-FE is focusing on include defining clearer definition of Organizational and Depot Maintenance responsibilities within the C4IT community. Every effort will be made to ensure these definitions align with the sustainment responsibilities for all enterprise C4IT capabilities.

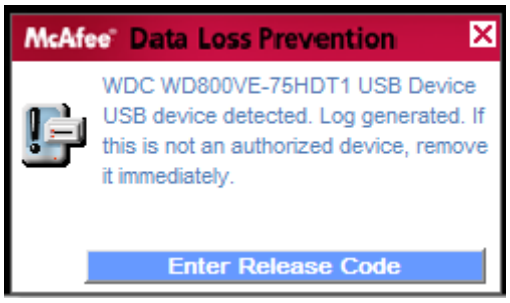
The DCMS Directors Council witnessed the signing of the process guides and encouraged this type of collaboration and documentation. The approved C4ITSC-SFLC process guides are accessible via CG Portal at the following link: https://cgportal.uscg.mil/CTL/EK8INH. The C4ITSC will be using TRACI matrices and swim-lane charts as part of on-going partnerships such as data-center consolidations and migrations.

Additional coordination efforts have been occurring between C4IT-SC and the other centers including FINCEN and the Aviation Logistics Center (ALC). An initial Memorandum of Understanding was approved, focusing on sustainment roles for systems provided under recent acquisitions and improving the interoperability of our aviation assets. But as our interactions to sustain aviation C4IT systems become more complex, we recognize the need to clearly define our roles and responsibilities. We anticipate chartering teams to develop TRACI Matrices, process guides, and swim lane charts. Best practices include adopting this approach to define all critical mission support interrelationships.

Tracking Plug-in of SMART Phones and USB FLASH Media Devices

By Tom Pedagno, C4ITSC-TISCOM, Enterprise Services and Operations Division

In mid-OCTOBER 2011 the C4ITSC turned on a monitoring tool that detects anytime a data storage device (authorized or not) is plugged into a USB port on the Standard Workstation. When detected, a small window pops up in the lower right corner of the screen. The following is an example of the pop up window:



This information is transmitted back to a central server and maintained in a log for further processing.

In accordance with ALCOAST 477/08, which is acknowledged every time a user logs onto a Standard Workstation, connecting USB flash memory devices, Androids, iPhones, cameras or any storage device other than a spindled, encrypted hard drive **is not allowed**. The ALCOAST also provides approved procedures if you have an official business need to transfer digital data from a flash memory device to the Standard Workstation via a standalone computer and a CD-ROM or DVD. A list of authorized spindled, encrypted hard drives can be found at the ITCCB website at https://cgportal.uscg.mil/delivery/Satellite/TISCOM/ITCCB

The following table shows the number of occurrences that smart phones, digital cameras, or USB flash drives have been plugged into a standard workstation.

Month	Android	Camera	Flash	iPhone	Total
Nov - 2011	1,253	335	1,642	584	3,814
Dec - 2011	977	258	1,535	406	3,176
Jan - 2012	775	148	1,461	242	2,626

The C4ITSC-TISCOM has been analyzing the data captured during the first three months to better tune the monitoring tool. They have been working via the Field Services Division and the ESUs to validate the data and educate the users. This has resulted in a steady decline of the number of unauthorized devices being plugged into the network. After another couple of months of data validation and user education, the information will be used to hold the users accountable for violating COMDT policy.

USB Flash storage devices are not authorized for use because they present a serious risk of introducing viruses and malware to the enterprise IT infrastructure. The DOD has conducted significant analysis on this risk and deemed it necessary to continue the ban of USB flash storage devices. As a .mil network, the Coast Guard is subject to DOD policy and is scrutinized by their monitoring and inspections. US CYBERCOM receives automatic summary reports from this monitoring tool and holds the Coast Guard accountable for any noncompliance to their policies.

So please do not put our enterprise IT infrastructure, your career or the Coast Guard's relationship with the DOD at risk. Remember: Do not plug your Android, iPhone, camera or any other flash memory device into your standard workstation.

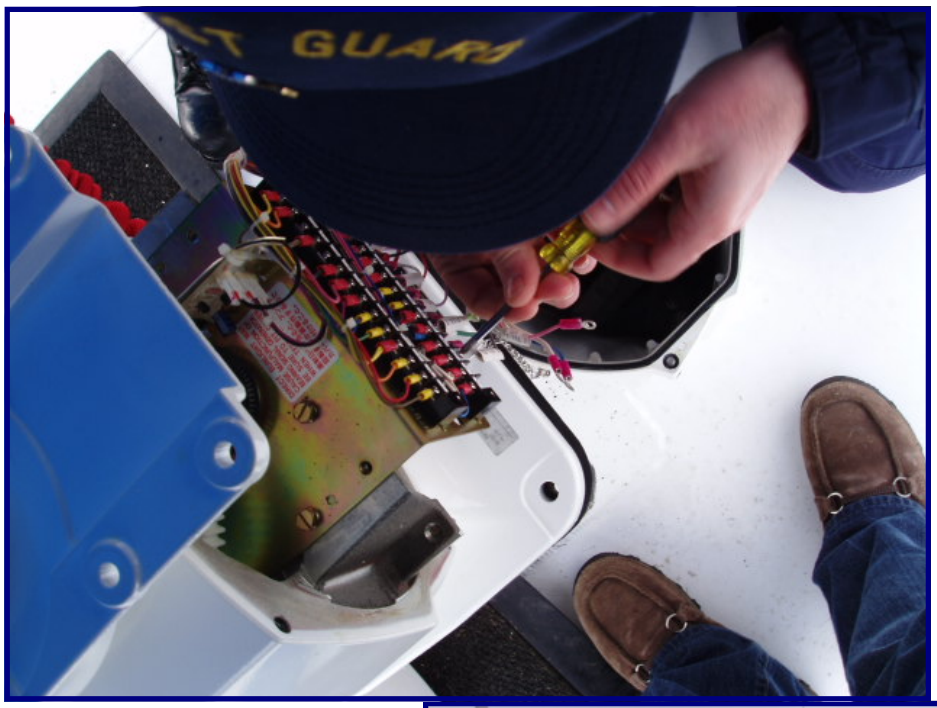
Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Chief Financial Officer Award for Excellence Supervisory Award for Exemplary Performance

CDR Marc Knowlton, C4IT SC Comptroller and C4IT SC-ALD Deputy, received the 2011 Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Award for Excellence, Supervisory Award for Exemplary Performance. CDR Knowlton transformed and seamlessly integrated Coast Guard wide C4IT business and fiscal processes. In addition, he empowered the ALD staff of 35 financial and logistics managers in employing principled, holistic execution of a $506M budget for a 1,800 person organization.

Adapt, Improvise, but above all be Safe

By ET1 Fidencio Miramontes, ESD South Portland

"Safety First" has to be our mantra, especially when working under arduous conditions such as those we experienced while swapping out the AN/SPS-73 Radar Pedestal and eight foot Array onboard USCGC MORAY (WPB-87331) during a winter sleet and rain storm. The existing Pedestal/MTR and Array had sustained severe damage from saltwater intrusion due to a failed gasket.



After conducting a thorough risk assessment, we identified hazards, such as the layer of ice on the deck and the potential for sleet and snow driven by 40 know gusts, to contaminate of the replacement pedestal and array during installation. We then provided a briefing to the MORAY OOD that described in detail the work that we would perform, ensuring our compliance with all current safety regulations referenced in the Coast Guard Environmental and Safety Manual (COMDTINST M5100.47) as well as MORAY's SOP for working aloft.

Rubber based carpet runs and a sturdy step ladder were brought over from the ESD to be placed around the work area to provide sure footing and easy access to and from the Bridge overhead deck. A waterproof tarp was then rigged from the mast extending out over the work area to provide shelter from the sleet and wind. Plastic bags covered the new replacement Pedestal and Array while they were transported to the work area above the Bridge.

Wearing safety harnesses attached to a secure life line, ESD Techs removed the damaged pedestal and array and then installed the replacement units. Taking the time to address the personnel and equipment safety issues proved to be key to the complete success of the evolution.

OSC Participates in Wreaths Across America

The Operations Systems Center's (OSC's) Lieutenant Ed Porter and Operations Specialist First Class J. R. Marshall recently participated in the Wreaths Across America ceremony at Ball's Bluff National Cemetery near Leesburg, VA.

Wreaths Across America is a nonprofit organization that honors our country's veterans. Their mission is to "…Remember, Honor, Teach and is carried out by coordinating wreath laying ceremonies at Arlington National Cemetery and other locations in all 50 states and beyond." The annual tradition of laying wreaths at Arlington began in 1992.

The local proceedings began with a "Call to Remembrance" as attendees honored those fallen in the line of duty while serving our country.

Following the "Circle of Remembrance" the formal wreath-laying tradition was performed by representatives from each branch of military service accompanied by service songs and sharp salutes.

Lieutenant Porter placed the wreath dedicated to the United States Coast Guard. It was placed in honor of Medal of Honor recipient Signalman First Class Douglas A. Munro for his heroic actions at Guadalcanal in 1942. Under heavy fire, Munro used his boat as a shield between the Japanese and the Marines enabling the evacuation to proceed successfully.

Operations Specialist First Class J. R. Marshall placed the wreath dedicated to the United States Merchant Marines.

From the Honor Guard Officer-in-Charge

Greetings from the Ceremonial Honor Guard!! It has been a while since the "*Post*", the Honor Guard's newsletter, has been published. We thought it would be a good idea to revive it since the Honor Guard does so many great things that we should share with our family, friends, and Coast Guard. It can be downloaded from our website.

This is from my inaugural input for the newsletter as the Officer-in-Charge. As I shared in my Change-of-Watch comments to the troops, I consider the opportunity to serve as the Officer-in-Charge as an honor, and a dream realized. My Coast Guard career started here at the Honor Guard as a Seaman 14-short years ago. Never in my imagination did I think or plan to be in this position. From the moment I arrived and continuously to date, I have been impressed with our Shipmates hard work, professionalism, and excellence through pride, poise, and perfection. I will give them my best effort, and I look forward to serving with each of them over the coming years.

As I committed upon reporting, the Honor Guard's values of pride, poise, and perfection will support Admiral Papp's Guiding Principles. By now, Honor Guard Shipmates have seen that we "steady the service" by facilitating TAD and other opportunities to help them achieve their professional and personal goals such that we can synthesize the full measure of each member's abilities. We "honor our profession" daily through the rendering of respect and honors to those currently serving, those that have served, and those that have left us here to stand the watch. We "strengthen our partnerships" by operating as a force multiplier in the Military District of Washington, the Coast Guard, and the local community. Finally, we "respect our shipmates" by fostering a professional environment where every member of the unit can serve as an equal partner and be respected for his or her individual contribution to mission success.

Our mission and operational readiness are at extremely high levels. The troops have made a concerted effort to prepare for the upcoming ceremonial season and beyond. The Honor Guard is expected to travel extensively this year as we participate in many drill team missions, the bi-centennial celebration of the War of 1812, and the inevitable rendering of honors to fallen active duty and retired Shipmates.

You can be very proud of your Ceremonial Honor Guardsmen and the accomplishments and contributions they make each day, both on and off duty, to the world and the local community. I encourage you to stop by and see what we are doing and please look for opportunities to get involved. Thanks again for all of the sacrifices our crew, spouses, families, and friends make on a daily basis such that the Honor Guard can execute all assigned missions.

Jason M. Himsey, LT

Officer-in-Charge

USCG Ceremonial Honor Guard

Silent Drill Team

During the last weekend in January, the Honor Guard sent a firing party, Colors team, and the Drill Team's elite 'Center Four' (C4) to Florida to participate in the Coast Guard City celebration in Clearwater and to render honors at the CGC Blackthorn Memorial in St. Petersburg.

Drill Team's 'C-4' from left to right: SN Benjamin Smithee, SN Brian Martin, SN Justin Baker, SN Michael Rosinski, and Drill Master, Petty Officer First Class Andrew Hammersmith.

SN Michael Rosinski (far right) renders honors at the CGC Blackthorn Memorial.

Left to right: SN Justin Baker, SN Benjamin Smithee, Petty Officer First Class Andrew Hammersmith, SN Michael Rosinski, and SN Donald Hackett

Joint Service Proposal

TISCOM, Virginia - Taking our joint ceremonial mission to a new level, Marine Corporal Garrett Quinn donned his ceremonials and ventured into unfamiliar Coast Guard territory, on the 25th of January, 2012.

Arriving at the Coast Guard Ceremonial Honor Guard's daily mid-morning muster, Quinn led a team of six Marine casket team members directly into the center of the Coast Guard formation. As baffled Honor Guardsmen looked on, Quinn ceremoniously removed his cover, approached Coast Guard's Seaman Stephanie Severns, and bent down on one knee.

Visibly nervous, Quinn briefly steadied himself before giving a short proposal as he presented SN Severns with a ring. An overjoyed SN Severns accepted immediately. This is the first Honor Guard proposal since it's establishment in 1962.

ESU/ESD Miami Beach Fish Call

By ET1 Randolph Malone

ESU & ESD Miami Beach technician shed their working blue for the big blue, with fair winds and following sees on a recent morale day.

On a balmy November morning in Miami Beach, 3 dozen salty dogs loaded up packed lunches and made preps for getting underway. As the "Reward 2" chugged past the jetties into the open sea, the crew prepared bait and set the trolling lines. No sooner had the last line set, than the first catch of the day found a hook. Ten hard fought minutes later a victorious PO Joseph Bryan successfully landed a beautiful 24-inch Spanish Mackerel. This early catch set the pace for the positive attitude that would permeate the entire trip. That fun loving and relaxed pace was easily evident in our entire group as line after line dropped at every fishing spot.

Several fun filled hours and five magnificent mahi-mahi later, the weary crew of the "Reward 2" headed back to homeport and everyone knew they had experienced a morale day they would not soon forget. Every one expressed thanks to PO Samuel Lee and LTJG Garrett Feldman whose hard work made this great morale day possible. Even though only a small number of fish where landed, (not counting the truly enormous ones that surely got away), it was striking how apparent it was that no one came away feeling shorted. The crew reminisced, "A bad day of fishing is still better then a good day of work."

Mighty Fishermen Heading Out To Sea

PO Hayes And Mr. Feldman - Fighting the good fight with some mighty Mahi-mahi.

"Fishing is a discipline in the equality of men - for all men are equal before fish."
~Herbert Hoover~

State of Geospatial Capabilities within the Coast Guard

By Mr. Peter Noy

This article will describe the state of geospatial capabilities within the Coast Guard by discussing the current state of the technology being utilized and the current uses within various mission areas. It will briefly discuss the move towards Coast Guard-wide geospatial consolidation which will reduce the overall number of unique geospatial viewers into a more consolidated toolset to reduce what has been called "the swivel chair interface." The primary point of contact for this article will be Mr. Peter Noy, Lead for the Coast Guard Geospatial Management Office (GMO) in CG-63 and Asset Manager for a number of Coast Guard Enterprise offerings including the ESRI ArcGIS Desktop Suite, Enterprise Geographic Information System (EGIS) and the Search and Rescue Optimal Planning System (SAROPS).

According to *A to Z GIS – An illustrated dictionary of geographic information systems* (edited by Tasha Wade and Shelly Sommer), GIS is an acronym for geographic information system. It is an integrated collection of computer software and data used to view and manage information about geographic places, analyze spatial relationships, and model spatial processes. A GIS provides a framework for gathering and organizing spatial data and related information so that it can be displayed and analyzed. More simply stated; a GIS provides a way for a user to take data from a number of sources and generate an easy to use map.

In order to support its many mission areas, the United States Coast Guard collects or generates large amounts of information with reference to location, both static and dynamic, which can be related to the people, vessels, and facilities it interacts with on a day-to-day basis. This information can range from day to day environmental response and vessel or facility inspections to law enforcement actions and search and rescue operations. While the type of information can range as widely as the mission areas supported by the Coast Guard, the common thread is that it has a unique geospatial component. This simply means that whenever the Coast Guard performs its duties, they have occurred at a known location somewhere on the face of the Earth. This location-specific information can be as general as a navigable waterway or location within a Coast Guard Sector, or as specific as a street address of a facility or a latitude and longitude for an activity. As a result of having an identifiable location, this information can be plotted onto a map or chart for situational awareness. While the identification, collection, and storage of this information is in itself a challenge for the Coast Guard member, the rapid recall, viewing, and sharing of this information is what poses the real challenge. Fortunately, the Coast Guard possesses a number of capabilities for accessing this information using what we can call, "a Geospatial Toolkit."

To provide for advanced geospatial capabilities, such as geo- analytical and high-end cartographic production, the Coast Guard leverages the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Enterprise License Agreement (ELA) for ESRI GIS software. In fact, a number of existing Coast Guard enterprise solutions, such as EGIS and SAROPS, were built using this software. In addition to enterprise level software, the ELA also provides access to the very powerful ArcGIS Desktop solution (Figure 1). This software provides the user with an extensive set of that far exceed, currently, existing USCG enterprise solutions.

However, with this increased capability comes the need for training and expertise using the software. Fortunately, the ELA also provides access to a "Virtual Campus" for training. The ArcGIS Desktop capability is intended to support very high-order requirements that are needed by a very small user-base. For common day-to-day requirements, a number of enterprise capabilities exist.

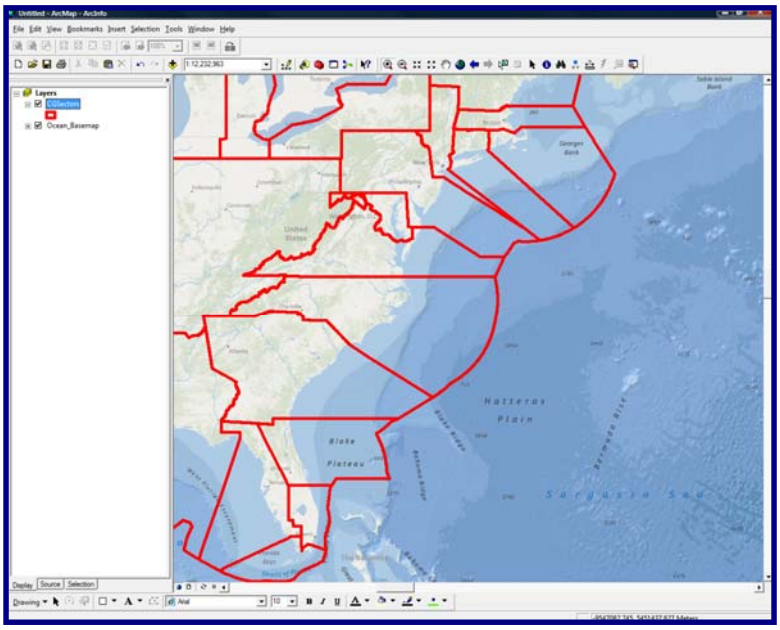


Figure 1

The ArcGIS Explorer for Desktop application, (Figure 2.), represents a much lighter weight solution for the Coast Guard. The Enterprise Geographic Information System (EGIS) leverages this software to allow for the rapid recall and viewing of information in a user-friendly format. Being a

continued on next page

State of Geospatial Capabilities within the Coast Guard

lighter client, the learning curve is not as steep as one would experience with the full desktop application discussed earlier. While examining large sets of tabular information may seem overwhelming to the user trying to answer a question, overlaying that data onto a map immediately provides that user with an overview of the information within the area of interest. The user is able to see the extent of a situation, such as vessel traffic near an oil spill zone, to gain a better understanding of the situation. Another user may want to know about all boarding activities within a given Sector and can easily utilize existing data to pull and map this information. For example, mission related information is stored within the Coast Guard's primary information system for operations activities, known as the Marine Information for Safety and Law Enforcement System (MISLE). Using that as a resource, a user can plot out where response activities have occurred over a given time period and determine if existing small boat stations are placed in the appropriate location.

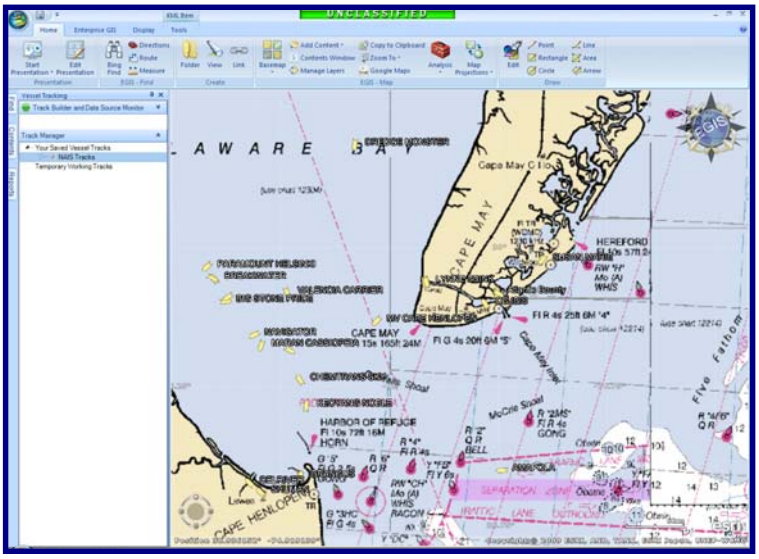


Figure 2

While the Coast Guard enterprise solutions each support unique requirements and programs, lessons learned from the Deepwater Horizon Event and Hurricane Irene clearly illustrate the need for a consolidated viewer that will provide nearly identical user experience and reduce the need for training on multiple systems. The C4IT Service Center and Headquarters are working together to build a viewer that provides for the full capabilities of the native applications (SAROPS from C3CEN and EGIS from OSC). Developers from both sites are working together to share expertise and developed toolsets to allow for a common look and feel.

Figure 3 shows a prototype of the CG1V web application. This viewer, named Coast Guard OneView (CG1V), will allow for specific toolsets to be developed and deployed using a common framework and will also serve as the platform for a CG Common Operating Picture (COP). This will help to insure that a tool in SAROPS, for example, looks and operates exactly like a tool in EGIS. And that data in one activity, maritime domain awareness for example, is available across the enterprise to those that have a need for it.

We are working towards having a consolidated viewer that will reduce the need to open up additional displays to merge the information together. CG1V will provide users access to sophisticated capabilities via a web-browser and will be built using the Silverlight toolset which also aligns the Coast Guard with the DHS GMO goals and objectives. This will allow for the development of rich internet applications (RIA). However, it is important to know that the extensive investments made in the backend for many of the geospatial systems will still be utilized which will help to keep costs contained. By migrating to a web-enabled viewer, it is anticipated that Coast Guard will experience a reduction in the overall management burden of having to install a desktop client on each uses machine as well as reduce the number of systems users have to learn.

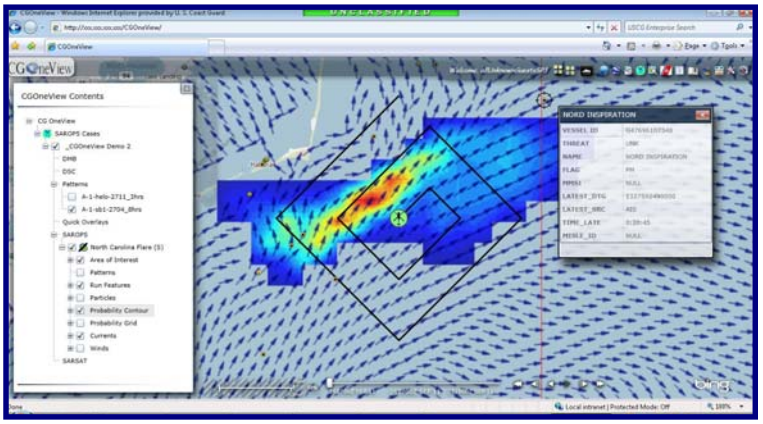


Figure 3

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